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# HOW TO AVOID COLDS

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This affection, the one frequently diagnosed even by the laity, is the most popular ailment to which human flesh is heir. People living near the seacoast are most likely to contract it; everybody, young and old, sooner or later, suffers with it, if not many times, at least once or twice in a lifetime; very few are spared; infants and children are particularly subject to colds, and it is at this age that colds are most dangerous to health and life. One attack does not confer immunity to future attacks as in many diseases but, on the contrary, renders the individual more susceptible to future colds. The only exception to this rule is the "grippe" cold; but even in such a case the patient's resistance to subsequent infection is considerably reduced and consequently he is more susceptible to severer infections, such as pneumonia or tuberculosis. Therefore colds should not be neglected in the too popular belief that they will take care of themselves, or that they are of minor importance, but they should receive the most careful attention. Cases of typhoid fever and other serious diseases are often, during the first few days, considered "nothing more than a cold." The resistance to infection of the individual should be kept at the top notch by hygienic measures; proper clothing should be worn; the air breathed at home, at the place of business, the theatre, and in the schoolroom should be devoid of germs and irritating particles of dust as far as possible, and should be of the proper temperature and moisture. Mothers, nurses, physicians, teachers, medical inspectors, boards of education, and boards of health should seek to prevent the spread of colds by adequate quarantine.

The term "cold" is somewhat indefinite, meaning a catarrhal inflammation of the respiratory tract, including the nose, pharynx, larynx, trachea, bronchi and lungs. Whether colds are due to germs alone, or to conditions of the atmosphere alone, has not yet been definitely settled, but no doubt the proper solution of the question lies in adopting the middle course, and giving place to both elements in the causation of colds. In these days of steam-heated apartments, unquestionably the excessively dry atmosphere resulting, irritates and congests the nasal mucous membrane, causing a reduced vitality and resistance to infection, and as a result, germs find a ready harbor and breeding place. It is a well known fact that people who spend much of their time outdoors do not suffer with colds as do people who work indoors. A chilling of the body, either indoors or outdoors, predisposes to colds by congesting the inner organs and the respiratory mucous membranes, resulting in inflammation from irritation or germs.

Colds should receive careful attention for three reasons: First, because they often lead to more serious complications, such as inflammation of the middle ear and mastoid, with or without partial or complete deafness, infection of the accessory sinuses of the nose, brain abscess, enlarged cervical or bronchial glands, pneumonia, tuberculosis, or chronic catarrhal process; second, colds are contagious, and therefore dangerous to the rest of the family and the community; third, while the cold may be nothing more than a rhinitis, it may also be the first symptom of a more serious disease, such as measles, scarlet fever, typhoid fever, tuberculosis, pneumonia, Bright's disease, etc. Every one is a law unto himself in the matter of catching colds; though one may be exposed to inclement weather with impunity, to another such an exposure would mean an immediate chill followed by a rhinitis, laryngitis or bronchitis.

To treat a cold effectively, the underlying cause must be sought and corrected. They are, in order of their frequency: 1, improper clothing, (all ages); 2, adenoids, (children); 3, influenza, (all ages); 4, worry, (adults); 5, overeating and excessive drinking, (adults). Other causes may be classified as shown on the accompanying chart:

The chief cause is by many considered to be improper clothing. The familiar examples are the frequency of rhinitis after the first cold snap following the warm season when some people continue to wear their light clothing, or neglect to wear an overcoat, or when people are caught in a shower without an umbrella and rubbers, becoming drenched to the skin. A chill follows and the next day the symptoms of a cold appear. It is a well known fact that sudden changes of temperature cause colds. To overcome these sudden changes, man has fortified himself with clothing. In order to preserve a uniform temperature immediately around the body, the warm body air between the skin and clothing, as well as the air in the clothing and between the several layers of clothing, must be prevented from escaping. Cold air should be breathed through the nose, but the body surface requires a uniform temperature. It has been well said that our clothing must furnish a transportable climate.

Not only do the temperature and winds require consideration in the selection of proper clothing, but the moisture of the atmosphere as well. The body constantly loses water in the form of perspiration, about a quart daily in moderate temperature and more in hot weather. If the perspiration evaporates quickly, a cooling of the body surface results. Clothing should be made of such material as will absorb the moisture slowly and steadily, and also give it up slowly. Linen absorbs water quickly and also gives it up quickly, cotton more slowly, silk more than cotton, and wool the most. It is for this reason that woolen underwear has become so popular in those regions of the world where sudden changes of temperature frequently occur. In addition, underwear which is worn during the daytime should not be worn at night, so as to allow the moisture which has collected during the day to dry and evaporate, thereby insuring the constant wearing of dry underwear. Rubber clothing predisposes to the catching of colds because it prevents the evaporation of perspiration and also causes discomfort. The body surface should be surrounded by a temperature of about 80 degrees F.

Classification of Rhinitis (Common Cold)

- Acute
  - Infectious
    - Influenza
    - Measles
    - Scarlet fever
    - Diphtheria
    - Pertussis
    - Hay fever
    - Rheumatism
    - Tuberculosis
    - Typhoid fever
    - Most common organisms found in infectious rhinitis are
      - Bacillus influenzae
      - Micrococcus catarrhai
      - Pneumococcus
      - Bacterium fusiform
      - Staphylococcus
      - Meningococcus
      - Streptococcus
      - Tubercle bacillus
  - Mechanical
    - Adenoids
    - Deviation of nasal septum
      - Cause
        - Hypertrophied tonsils
        - Irregular teeth
        - Hypertrophied nasal bones
        - Purulent otitis media
        - Cervical adenitis
        - Undersized children
    - Occupational causes, dusty rooms, drafts, etc.
    - Hypertrophied turbinate bones
  - Vasomotor
    - Worry, business, etc.
    - Wet feet
    - Nervous exhaustion
    - Lack of sleep, late hours
    - Sexual excesses
  - Hygienic
    - Improper clothing
    - Autointoxication, overeating or undereating
    - Overheated or underheated rooms
    - Overdrinking, alcohol or coffee
    - Smoking excesses
    - Constipation
- Chronic
  - Hypertrophic
  - Suppurative
  - Atrophic

*(To be continued)*